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### Holiday blues, blahs and boohoos, begone

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**NEWS RELEASE**

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Dec. 3, 1996

**HOLIDAY BLUES, BLAHS AND BOOHOOS, BEGONE****MISSOULA —**

Those holiday blues that drive you out of life for a lot of older folks this time of year can be foiled with a few tips from a University of Montana—Missoula faculty member with expertise in gerontology.

Social work Associate Professor Cindy Garthwait reached into her black bag of blues antidotes for these suggestions, gleaned from her experience as a nursing home social worker, private counselor in gerontology and teacher of courses in adult development and aging.

■ Take the initiative and invite others to your home, especially if you would otherwise be alone.

■ Don't expect holidays to magically patch up family conflicts and improve relationships. If you can't communicate now, the holidays won't help. Having your expectations too high can lead to disappointment.

■ Give gifts with meaning to those you love. A letter telling them how much they have meant to you over the years or some old photographs they could treasure will be much more meaningful than cash or an expensive gift.

■ Find ways to help someone in need that you don't know personally. Many organizations and churches provide opportunities to be of service. This will remind you of how much you have.

■ Don't forget the spiritual meaning of the holidays, no matter your faith. Use this time to recommit to a life of sharing. It will help put your life and challenges into perspective.

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**Contact:** Cindy Garthwait, (406) 243-2954.

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Dailies, weeklies, state radio and local TV  
Blues.rl